



**“TESTIMONY for February 21st, 5P.M. – HB07027CSDE
for the
APPROPRIATIONS ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE”**

Submitted By: BLOOMFIELD SOCIAL and YOUTH SERVICES

February 21, 2017

**To: Elementary and Secondary Sub-Committee Chairs: Chairwoman Gayle Slossberg,
Chairman Chris Rosario
Appropriations Committee: Chairs Sen. Cathy Osten, Sen. Paul Formica, Rep. Toni Walker, and
Ranking Member Melissa Ziobron**

Greetings from Bloomfield Social and Youth Services!

I am providing this testimony to encourage your continued support of the 101 Youth Service Bureaus serving 144 communities throughout the State of CT. Personally I have enjoyed a 36 year career in Human Services and Social Work, 28 of those years in Youth Services. I am proudly representing the Town of Bloomfield where I am the Youth Services Coordinator. In a community of some 20,500 residents, Social and Youth Services is available to every resident in the community. We are the front liners in providing programs and services for children and families. During the course of any given week, we are providing therapeutic support services, case management, crisis intervention, after school programs, positive youth and family development groups, a juvenile review board, a foster care support network, youth action club, an intergenerational club and activities, police and youth groups, and engaging in community wide events that promote the health and well-being of children and families. During Fiscal Year 2015-2016, 100 + youth services programs involved 6,800 individuals and families. Youth Services partnered with 331 local, regional and statewide individuals, groups, agencies, communities of faith and businesses to provide these services. Most importantly, 90+ percent of participants rated their experiences and involvement as beneficial and useful.

Youth Service Bureaus develop programs and services based on the local needs and uniqueness of our respective communities. We have coordinated, collaborated and delivered services for decades in a very cost effective manner. There is no exaggeration in stating hundreds of thousands of children and families have been positively impacted by their involvement with YSBs. Our work at the local level has diverted thousands of youth from involvement with the juvenile justice system, and thousands more from involvement with the CT State Department of Children and Families. When interventions are needed at the state level, YSBs are called upon to partner in providing continued services for children and families involved with the Juvenile Justice System and/or the CT Department of Children and Families. We answer the call. The Results Based Accountability process substantiates the progress and effectiveness of Youth Service Bureaus.

The continued efforts by the state to divert youth from state agency involvement, particularly in the juvenile justice system, and the need for the state to streamline services during a challenging budget period, increases the likelihood that our local Youth Service Bureaus will be needed now, more than ever. Your continued investment in our community based services helps us to leverage other funding sources and support. Local prevention and intervention connects children and families to one another, their schools and their communities.

Youth Service Bureaus provide an efficient, cost effective and beneficial system of services for 144 towns and cities. Our local work supports the goals and initiatives of the state and saves millions of dollars in the state budget through diversion programs and services. Please help us to move forward by fully supporting the Youth Service Bureau line items, without further reductions and without combining our unique system with other programs and services funded by the state. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Maneggia, LMSW
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